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Allen W. Dulles

IN MUCH THE SAME way that the children of mediaeval families were often born to the cloth or to the household of their monarch, Allen W. Dulles was born to the public service.

The grandson of one secretary of state and, it turned out, the brother of another, Mr. Dulles grew up in an environment that attached a higher priority to the public welfare than to personal success. Not surprisingly, he launched his career as a member of the U. S. Foreign Service.

In World War II, Mr. Dulles directed the work of the European section of the Office of Strategic Services and earned for himself a world-wide reputation as a gatherer and assessor of intelligence. His appointment to the directorship of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Eisenhower administration was both logical and prudent.

Even after his long tenure in that assignment ended, Mr. Dulles stood ready, as he had throughout his life, to undertake any other assignment in the public arena to which he was called. One of these was service on the commission appointed by President Johnson to investigate the assassination of President Kennedy.

It is unfortunate, in a way, that agencies like the CIA—and, consequently, public of-

ficials like Mr. Dulles—are forbidden by statute from claiming credit for their triumphs. They are even incapable of defending themselves or their agencies when they come under attack. Even when the CIA's ventures have gone awry, it has been all but impossible for rank-and-file Americans to know whether the error was the CIA's or whether it stemmed from the misjudgments of other agencies of government. It is possible, consequently, that we shall have to wait until the history of our era is assembled dispassionately and definitively to know the full scope of Mr. Dulles' contribution.

However that appraisal turns out, the nation has lost a dedicated and competent public servant in his death.